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PARLEY THE PORTER, AND MR. FLATTERWELL.

HAVE you read Hannah More's beautiful story of "Parley the Porter"? It is too long to give you here; but I can tell you something about it, and perhaps you will understand what it is meant to teach.

A rich and good man had a fine large castle, situated in the midst of a great wilderness, but inclosed in a garden. There was a band of robbers in the wilderness, who would have been glad to plunder and destroy the castle, but who had never succeeded, because the good man's servants, who were many, had always followed his orders, to "*watch without ceasing.*" To make them the more careful, he had told them that their care would soon have an end, and they should enjoy a delightful rest.

One day, as he was about going from home, he called his servants together, and gave them particu-

lar directions about their duties in his absence. He specially charged them to watch against the robbers, saying that it would be impossible for any foes from *without* to enter the castle, as long as there were no traitors *within*. He directed them, also, often to consult his *BOOK OF LAWS*.

Parley, who was the porter, and kept the door, promised, like the others, to be very watchful and faithful. For a time, all went well; but at length Parley began to peep through the hedge that inclosed the garden, and one day he spied a very well-dressed man passing near to him. It was Mr. Flatterwell, a man "*whose words were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart.*" He spoke so politely to Parley, that he put him entirely off his guard; for Parley had no notion that this soft and civil man could be one of those terrible robbers.

By degrees, Mr. Flatterwell persuaded him to consent to let him come into the garden at night

and make a friendly call, only asking to be permitted to stand under the castle window. As the hour drew near, Parley thought of his master's orders; and, to divert his mind, he opened the *Book of Laws*. He happened to open it at the words, "*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*" For a moment, his heart failed him; but soon he remembered that Mr. Flatterwell had promised to tell him something greatly to his advantage, and he stopped his ears to the voice of conscience.

Mr. Flatterwell came at the appointed hour, through the hole in the hedge which Parley had made for him, and stood beneath the castle window. Soon, by his pleasing words, he prevailed upon Parley to come down to the door, and open the upper half of it. Then he induced Parley to drink of a delicious liquor that he carried with him in a bottle, and then the foolish porter was in his power.

"Will you now let me in?" said Flatterwell.

"Ay, that I will," said the deluded Parley, and eagerly pulled down the bars, drew back the bolts, and forced open the locks, thinking he could never let his friend in soon enough. He had just presence of mind to say, "*My dear friend, I hope you are alone.*" Flatterwell swore he was. Parley opened the door, and in rushed, not Flatterwell only, but the whole gang of robbers, while Flatterwell changed his soft tone, crying out in a voice of thunder, "*Down with the castle! kill, burn, and destroy!*"

Poor Parley was the first to suffer. As he fell, covered with wounds, he cried, "*O my master, I die a victim to my unbelief in thee, and to my own vanity and imprudence! Oh that the guardians of all other castles would hear me with my dying breath repeat my master's admonition, that all attacks from without will not destroy, unless there is some confederate within! Oh that the keepers of all other castles would learn from my ruin, that he who parleys with temptation is already undone!*"

Dear young reader, *your heart is your castle.* Will you learn the lesson of the story of Parley the porter, and Mr. Flatterwell?

For the Child at Home.

OUR VISIT TO DUCK ISLAND.

Who, among all my little readers, remembers a promise made long ago, that some time I would tell you all about our visit to Duck Island, and how we came near being shipwrecked? If you've not quite forgotten it, you shall now hear all about it.

Now, you must know that Roy and I are making a collection of all kinds of curious things, — water-worn pebbles and shells of every hue, mosses, seaweeds, pale sea-flowers, and all manner of strange things, which the great heaving ocean leaves on the sands for us.

One hot August day, a little boat came sailing out of the blue mist off by our lighthouse, and, mooring at our little wharf, its master, who is a

great friend of Roy, gave him a handful of snowy shells, and some queer pebbles with many lines called agates, which he had brought from Duck Island. Straightway Roy was in a fever of impatience to set sail for the wonderful island, wrapped in its screen of mist. His vivid little fancy pictured wonderful treasures waiting for us on its white sands, in the shape of golden weeds and beautiful pebbles. However, it was quite impossible for us to go at present. But Roy, like most little boys (and girls too), sadly needed to learn the great lesson of patience. It is a very hard task, as all of you will some day find; and Roy, who had hardly learned its first principles, fretted somewhat, till his mother's reproof silenced him, and made him conscious of its wrong. Then he tried to be patient, and was quite silent upon the subject; only he had a certain way of looking longingly across the water, and then at me, as if it were very hard to wait.

But one beautiful morning saw James, the gardener, Roy, and I, afloat on the blue waves, bound for Duck Island, with a wide ocean vista before us, flecked with sails and shadows from the clouds. Our voyage did not end until the sun was high up in the sky. Then we stepped out on the white sands, and eager Roy ran off directly. It was a low, shrubless island, without any shelter, not even a hut for the clam-diggers; but the treasures for which we were searching were there in abundance, — whole handfuls of snowy shells cast up by the waves, some faintly tinged with pink, and others amber-tipped, and mottled all over with shades of brown.

And what merry times we had searching for agates! — agates marked all over with drops of yellow and crimson and blue; some with wavy, zigzag lines, so fine and beautiful that at first we could hardly perceive them; and others with yellow tints like rays of liquid sunshine; and, again, one or two in whose clear depths was a bit of purple moss imprisoned in its transparent casket, or a tiny shell as perfect as when it lay on the sandy beach. And when our baskets were filled, and we sat down to look at our treasures, how could our thoughts but turn to Him whose mighty hand had wrought such wonders of beauty in pebble and shell? God might have made each little shell without its beautiful tints, and had its little inhabitant none the less perfect; but the color and beauty, are they not for our eyes? And so with the fleecy clouds, the dancing waves, the shimmering vista of sky and water that lay before us; whose hand but His had wrought so sweetly for us?

After a lunch, we started for home. Who would have thought a little cloud, low down in the west, could have risen and shrouded the whole heavens before we were half across the wide stretch between us and home? But it did; and soon the storm burst on us in all its fury, the rain poured down and drenched us; the sails were torn; and we were in great danger. The land was almost hidden by long, trailing, black clouds, flying swiftly before the wind; and frightened little Roy clung tightly to my wet dress.

But, wet and trembling, we at last reached land in safety, very thankful for God's watchful care over us.

G. G.

For the Child at Home.

"FEAR'ST YOU DON'T!"

Charlie began to go to church when he was a very little boy, and soon learned to sit quite still in God's house, so as not to disturb those who went there to worship him. He was the minister's little son; and his father used to take him on his knee when he returned from church, and ask him if he could remember the text, or any thing he had said; and so Charlie learned that the sermons were for him too, and tried to listen and understand a little.

One Sunday, when he was three or four years old, his father said, "You were rather restless to-day, Charlie: I do not think you know what the text was." — "Oh, yes, I do, papa! It was, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Fear'st thou don't!'"

You see he said the text quite correctly, except that he added a little to it. If you look in the last chapter of St. John's Gospel, you will find that Jesus asked Simon Peter this question, "Lovest thou me?" three times; but he did not say, "Fear'st thou don't!" Charlie thought he meant that. Perhaps the minister spoke as if he feared some of his people did not love Jesus; or perhaps Charlie had a little doubt whether he did himself, and so added, "Fear'st thou don't!"

M. E. A.

For the Child at Home.

SOMETHING ABOUT BEES.

Many of my young friends have watched with interest a hive of bees, and seen the busy family at work. Bees are of three kinds: females, or queen-bees; males, or drones; and workers. These have nearly the same color, but differ in size, form, and occupation. A well-peopled hive consists of one queen, who reigns supreme, several hundred drones, and many thousand workers.



The Queen Bee.

The body of the queen bee is longer and more tapering than that of the other bees, of a livelier shade of color, and tinged with yellow on the under side. Her wings are short, her movements slow and majestic as becomes a queen; and, wherever she goes, she is accompanied by a little body-guard of workers. This service is taken in turn, and never neglected; and she receives every mark of attention and respect which human beings can give to a beloved monarch.



The Queen receiving homage.

The male bee, or drone, so called, as some think, from the peculiar noise he makes when on the wing, is much larger than the worker, and thicker in proportion. The drones are the fathers of the family; but the work for the family is not done by them. From this fact the drone has been called an idler, a useless member of the bee family; and so far has this injustice been done to the little insect, that we apply the word "drone" to all idlers who live in luxurious ease at the expense of others.



The Drone.

But the drone does not work simply because he can not work. He has no tongue suitable for gathering honey, no baskets for carrying food, and no tools for wax-making. Shall he be censured for not using those things which he does not possess, — for not performing labors he was never intended to perform? All animals, man himself included, are fitted for the work which God intended them to perform, and no more. Thus, in the hive, the queen is especially adapted for her office; the worker has at command all the tools needed for her many labors; and the drone is no less perfectly fitted for his peculiar sphere.

Workers constitute the principal population of the hive; there being often as many as twenty thousand, or even more, in a single community. From the worker the bee-character has always been painted, loyal, laborious, patient, and skillful.



The Worker.

The body of the worker is about half an inch in length, one-sixth of an inch in its greatest breadth, and oblong in shape. The middle portions of the hind legs are hollowed into triangular cavities, or baskets. In these curiously formed baskets the bee carries its load safely to the hive. Besides the stomach proper, the bee has what may be called a honey-bottle, consisting of a little bag, pointed in front, and used simply for keeping honey while it is being gathered and carried to the hive.

Nothing can interest one who would study the habits of the bee more than the life and labors of the workers. Their skill, ingenuity, and industry surprise and delight us. And as we continue the study of these little insects, that are among the smallest of the works of God, we shall find continual cause for wonder and admiration.

P. V.

For the Child at Home.

"THE LITTLE DAGGER."

This is what "Hugo's" child, in Mrs. Elizabeth Oakes Smith's beautiful Christmas Legend of "The Lost Angel," calls a needle.

Little Mary was what in many countries they speak of as an "innocent." It means a person whose reasoning powers do not mature as the body grows; but the mind remains as the mind of a simple child, though the body develops day by day.

Dame Margery wanted her young charge to be a diligent, thrifty housewife; and, showing her some of her dead mother's handiwork, she said, "Come here, and let me teach thee to sew, child, or thou wilt be but an idle minion."

The little girl took the vail into her hands, and looked curiously at the small stitches, even, side by side, like long rows of shiny teeth; and, holding it up, she cried, "Are all our garments made in this way?"

"All," said the dame; "just so many stitches. Thy lady-mother made this pretty robe with her own dear hands."

The child lifted the garment upward, and kissed the little points which showed where her mother's fingers had touched it.

"Did my mother sit all day boring little holes into cloth this way?" asked she sorrowfully.

"Often; and she made garments for the poor, which she carried, with her own hands, giving them bread and wine, and her own sweet smile."

"Did she give to 'Bertrand of the Well?'" asked Mary.

"Often and often; for Bertrand was but an idle boy: and she would say, 'We must do good to those who can do no good to themselves, blessing God who has taught us to think and to do.'"

"Ay, this little dagger of thine, Dame Margery, is but a teasing thing. Must I learn to call it a needle? and use it? and sit mewed up all the bright days? Nay, nay, good Margery;" and she ran out laughing, with her long hair floating and undulating behind her.

I am afraid there is many a little girl, to whom God has given perfect reasoning powers, yet who regards the "little dagger," as "Innocent Mary" did, as "but a teasing thing."

But when we remember the poor, shivering bodies that are waiting for nimble fingers to cover them, I think we shall be glad to learn the use of the needle, and to sit "mewed up," "boring little holes in cloth."

That little dagger is a wondrous implement! Perhaps you do not know that the fine, delicate

needle with which you make your pretty clothing, has to pass through the hands of nearly one hundred workmen before it is perfected.

At first there is but a coil of steel wire; but it is cut and pointed and grooved and eyed and tempered and polished and drilled and subjected to a great many processes, that it would be profitable for you to see.

I should like to take you to "Redditch," or to some of the other places in England where they make millions of these little daggers, and have you watch the steel coil until it was changed into such quantities of glittering pointed things. Or we would go to the Continent, to "Aix la Chapelle," or "Borçette," and see what they do there in the way of needle-making; though it is said the English excel in this manufacture. In very early times, needles or bodkins of bone or ivory were used and in the ancient Egyptian tombs some have been found made of bronze (that, you know, is a mixture of copper and tin). Steel needles were first introduced into England from Spain, in the time of Queen Elizabeth; but the art of making them was kept secret until some years afterward. And now we have great quantities imported from Victoria's dominions every year.

It costs men their lives to point these little daggers for us. The fine steel dust that flies from them, as they apply them to the grindstone, gets into their lungs, and gives them what is called "grinders' asthma;" and they never grow to be old men. Is it not a pity that the things so necessary to our use bring such suffering and toil to those who produce them? You know how this comes about? It is because we have sinned.

How many of the little girls who read what I have written for them here will think of it all when they take up the shining implement? And how many of them will use it in making garments for the poor, so that grateful hands will lift up the nice, warm articles to inspect them; and grateful lips will kiss the tiny points that show where dear little fingers have touched?

Fanfan.

For the Child at Home.

ON THE SHORE.

Nellie Lee ran to meet her brothers when she saw them coming up from the beach, bringing a large basket of fish between them. "Here we are, Nellie," said George, "safe and sound from our fishing-trip. We started long before you was awake this morning, — Capt. James and Mr. Felton, and Frank and I."

"Yes: I found you and Frank were gone when I went down to breakfast; and mother said you went to the beach to launch the boat very early. But what have you caught? Come, tell me all about it."

"Let's get a little farther, to that tree, where we can rest a little. Come, Frank, hold on! Don't forget that big cod we have here for to-morrow's dinner."

"I'll keep up my side, George. Didn't he pull, though, before we got him in? Here we are. Now we'll sit in the shade. Go ahead, George; and I'll help you out, if you can't tell the story straight to Nellie."

"Well, we started about two hours before sunrise, and had a fine sail out about four miles from the shore. We saw two or three pretty birds, Nellie, that flew along close to the water, — 'Mother Carey's chickens,' Capt. James said they were."

"'Stormy petrels,' they are called in books," interrupted Frank.

"They touched the water with their feet once in a while," continued George, "and sometimes seemed almost to run on it. When we reached the fishing-ground, we anchored, and furled the sails. Then we went at it. Frank caught the first."

"But you had a bite before me, George."

"Well, Frank brought the first fish into the boat. It was a haddock. Show him, Frank."

The haddock was held up for Nellie's benefit, and she expressed her satisfaction.

"Then Capt. James caught a haddock, and then I caught this nice little rock-cod. See what a nice color he has! He's a real red coat."

"Yes: it's a little beauty," said Nellie. "Why do you call it a rock-cod?"



Capt. James says it's because these fish stay about the rocks. You can't catch them where you find a muddy or soft bottom. Then Mr. Felton caught an 'Old-England hake,' a fish that the captain said wasn't worth much; though I thought he was good-looking enough. After that, we did well with haddock; and Capt. James caught two or three cod. Once he said he had hooked a halibut. That made us all wide awake; for you know, Nellie, a halibut is a giant fish: but, after a few minutes, the halibut broke the line, and went off with part of it and the hook. Just before we were ready to come in, Frank had a big bite. The fish pulled so hard, that I took hold with him; and together we got into the boat the largest cod that was caught. Let's see him, Frank."

Frank removed the sea-weed, exposing a fine large codfish to Nellie's admiring gaze; and just then their father, who had come out from the house, joined them.

"Boys, you've done well," said he in his pleasant way; "got a basketful, and had a good time, I hope."

"Oh, yes!" answered both: "we always have a good time here, father, every summer," added Frank.

"We come here for rest and recreation," said Mr. Lee; "and I want you all to be happy, and, at the same time, to be learning something every day. Here is a lesson for you in these fish. They were made for our use; but they were made to enjoy life while they live. See how perfectly adapted they are to the element from which you have taken them! Notice the form, fins, and smooth surface, so admirably calculated for gliding through the water; the eyes for seeing, and the gills for breathing under water. Think, too, what variety is found among the finny tribes. You have caught three kinds of fish this morning. The number of living species of

fish is said to be ten thousand, of which more than six thousand have been described by those who have studied the subject.

"And who, my children, is the Maker of them all? Who fitted them so perfectly for their home in the sea, remembering and providing for all their wants? The good and wise God. See, now, what an interesting subject for thought and conversation your basket of fish affords. Perhaps we will talk more about it when we sit together this evening."

And, as their father passed on, Frank and George lifted up the basket again, and went along to the house with it, chatting pleasantly with Nellie about their voyage.

Victor.

For the Child at Home.

A MOHAMMEDAN THANKSGIVING.

One afternoon, when school did not keep, Maud Hamilton obtained leave from her mamma to invite some of her schoolmates to spend the afternoon with her. The little girls played a long time very happily, until at last they became weary.

Then Maud proposed that they should go into the house, and ask Aunt Annie to tell them a story: so away they all scampered to find Aunt Annie.

She was sitting in the library, reading; but she laid aside her book as the merry troop came running in, crying, "A story! a story!" and quietly inquired what the story should be about. Some wanted that it should be about one thing, and some about another; but at last Lucie Lathrop said, "Mamma told me that you had been to Palestine, where the people of the Bible lived. I wish that you would

tell us a story of something which you have seen there." As this proposal met with general approbation, Aunt Annie thus began: "Once, while I was spending a few weeks with a missionary lady at Jaffa, I witnessed a thanksgiving-feast which was made for a little boy about five years old. The little fellow, whose name was Mohammed, was the only child of Arbigardardee, the gardener, and had just recovered from a severe fit of sickness, which had threatened his life. The parents were so thankful to have their little boy well again, that they invited many of their friends to come and rejoice with them. In the afternoon, before the guests arrived, a kid was killed. The natives always keep a 'fatted calf,' or kid, ready for such an occasion.

"Some large stones were placed in the middle of the yard for a range, and on these the kid was to be roasted. About sundown the people began to assemble. I think that you would be frightened to see such a wild-looking company. The men wore one coarse garment reaching to their knees, and this, with a wide, red leathern girdle around their waists, a red cap, and a large turban, completed their dress. The women wore only long, very scant dresses of blue, with large mantles of the same color over their heads. Their faces were entirely covered, except their eyes."

"What do they cover their faces for?" interrupted little Jennie Parks; "I should not think that they could breathe."

"It is a Mohammedan law," replied Aunt Annie, "that the women, after they are married, shall keep their faces from the sight of all men except their husbands, father, and brothers. They think that the breaking of this law is the worst sin that they can commit."

"The veil is made of quite thin materials, so that they can breathe, but it is very warm in summer."

"What foolish women! I wouldn't do so!" ex-

